



March 1, 2010

Message From State Superintendent Christopher A. Koch

I had the opportunity last week to testify before the House Elementary and Secondary Education committee, providing lawmakers with a "State of the State of Education." It was a productive meeting. I was able to give them an idea of some of the great things our schools are accomplishing. It's important they understand the work that's going on in the classroom so that they know the investments being made in education are paying off.

While the committee was to center on everything-but-the-budget, you can't ignore the financial pressure increasing every day for schools in all corners of the state. The budget problems facing our state will require the focus of all our legislators and that is why I am engaging them at every opportunity to ensure they understand the magnitude of the crisis that is facing our schools. I also encourage you to educate and engage them whenever possible about the local impacts that are and will be occurring in their districts.

As you may have read last week, Gov. Quinn has placed budget documents on his Web site and members of his staff have been quoted as saying that they will propose an FY 2011 budget with a reduction of \$922 million for K-12 education. That corresponds precisely with the amount of federal stabilization funds that have been or will be used in FY 2010 to pay for General State Aid and other state funded education expenses.

Nine hundred and twenty two million dollars. I want to provide some perspective. Nine hundred and twenty two million dollars represents roughly 13 percent of all the state General Revenue Funds provided to K-12 education in this current fiscal year. It represents roughly 15 percent of the total spent on General State Aid and Mandated Categoricals, which make up more than 90 percent of our budget.

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I am telling you what I am telling legislators. You cannot take \$922 million from our budget without impacting student services and learning, or having districts severely drawing down reserves. These are inexorable facts.

I will be testifying before the House and Senate Appropriations committees this week to defend the Board's budget recommendation, which essentially calls for level support for education from FY 2010 to FY 2011. I remind you that the Board recommends a budget separate from the Governor and that is the basis that we will be working from in our dealings with legislators. You may access the Board's budget recommendation at http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY11_budget_recommendations021810.pdf .

If you have not completed the Winter 2010 Reduction in Force survey please contact our Data Analysis and Progress Reporting division at 217-782-3950. This will be useful information for assisting lawmakers to understand the jobs that are at stake in our schools during the budget debates.

Thanks and have a great week!

Chris

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

- **Non-Certified Staff Salary Study survey deadline** – March 1
- **Technology Integration Plan deadline** – March 1
- **2008-09 Study of School Level Expenditure Report deadline** – March 15
- **Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award nomination deadline** – March 15
- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant applications deadline** – March 15
- **Part 180 (Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools)** – Public comment period ends March 15
- **Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) RFP deadline** – April 14
- **Illinois School Wellness ... From A to Z Conference** – May 4
- **Illinois Young Authors' Conference in Bloomington-Normal** – May 15
- **2009-10 Eye Examination Data Collection deadline** – June 30
- **Postmark deadline for waiver applications to be considered by the General Assembly in Fall 2010** – Aug. 13
- **Superintendents' Conference** – Oct. 26-27

Funding and Disbursement Services

Public School Calendar Coding for Holidays Affected by PA 96-0640

As proposed public school calendars are being prepared and submitted for the upcoming 2010-11 school year please be reminded of important changes per the enactment of Public Act 96-0640 on Aug. 24, 2009.

The public act added language to Section 24-2 of the School Code and allows a school board or other entity eligible to apply for waivers and modifications under Section 2-3.25g to hold school or schedule teachers' institute, parent/teacher conference or staff development on five legal school holidays, namely Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday (Third Monday in January); Abraham Lincoln's Birthday (Feb. 12); Casimir Pulaski's Birthday (first Monday in March); Columbus Day (second Monday in October) and Veterans' Day (Nov. 11) provided that:

1. the person or persons honored by the holiday are recognized through instructional activities conducted on that day or if the day is not used for student attendance on the first day preceding or following that day; and
2. the entity that chooses to exercise this authority first holds a public hearing about the proposal. The entity shall provide notice preceding the public hearing to both educators and parents. The notice shall set forth the time, date and place of the hearing, describe the proposal, and indicate that the entity will take testimony from educators and parents about the proposal.

NOTE: Use of one or any of these five legal school holidays for anything other than a holiday is prohibited without completing the above process.

It is the responsibility of the public school district or other eligible entity to ensure that the required process is complete prior to manually changing the Holiday calendar code (HOL) to the modified calendar code (X, TI, FPT, XHPT, FI, XHI, XHS) on the Public School Calendar via IWAS. The district is required to keep local documentation of the public hearing, including testimony taken, for compliance and audit purposes.

If you have questions regarding this information please contact your Regional Office of Education or Marj Beck at 217-782-5256 or mbeck@isbe.net.

FY 2011 Employer Contributions to TRS – Federal Grants

Please be advised that for Fiscal Year 2011 (July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011) the employer's share of teachers' retirement will be 25.12 percent for personnel employed with federal grant funds.

As you are aware, this rate is preliminary and is subject to change. This is a change from the 23.38 percent which was in place for Fiscal Year 2010. Further information can be obtained from the TRS Web site at <http://trs.illinois.gov/subsections/employers/employerservices.htm>. The percentage is now determined annually according to the funding amount set by the state legislature.

If you have specific questions regarding TRS contributions, you may direct your inquiries to the TRS Employer Services Division at 888-877-0890.

ARRA

State Fiscal Stabilization Fund – Education (General State Aid Payments)

The Illinois State Board of Education has received final approval of the Phase II portion of the American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA) State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) – Education grant award. The approval will allow ISBE to distribute the next three General State Aid (GSA) payments to all local education agencies (LEAs) on Feb. 19, March 10 and March 19 with ARRA SFSF Education funds. These Federal payments must be recorded under revenue code 4850. As you make expenditures with these funds you must record the Fund, Function and Object Code along with Revenue Code 4850 in order to separately track the ARRA expenditures. The catalog of federal domestic assistance (CFDA) number for these funds for audit purposes is 84.394. The Federal Award number for these funds is S394A090014.

IMPORTANT: Federal rules require that the time between receipt of Federal funds and their expenditure must be minimized to avoid excess cash on hand. In order to comply with this requirement, all LEAs must assess whether or not they will be able to fully expend the next three GSA payments made with the ARRA SFSF Education funds on or before March 31, 2010. If your LEA will not be able to fully comply with this requirement, please contact Jim Mathes at jmathes@isbe.net, Marj Beck at mbeck@isbe.net or call 217-782-5256 to modify your GSA payments to the amount that you will be able to fully expend. Any payment reduction will be added to a State funded GSA payment in April. ARRA SFSF Education grant funds can be used for a variety of allowable local costs with a few exceptions. Please refer to "Expenditures – ARRA General State Aid" in the ARRA Reporting Instructions http://www.isbe.net/arra/pdf/arra_reporting_inst.pdf for more information.

On Dec. 18, the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued new American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) jobs reporting guidance, which can be accessed at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-08.pdf.

The new guidance makes two significant changes: Local education agencies will now report job totals by dividing the hours worked in the reporting quarter (i.e., the most recent quarter) by the hours in a full-time

schedule in that quarter. Previous guidance required LEAs to sum all hours worked from the current and all prior quarters and divide that total against a cumulative sum of all full-time hours from the current and prior reporting quarters.

The updated guidance eliminates subjective assessment and defines jobs to be reported as those funded in the quarter using ARRA funds. Jobs funded partially with ARRA funds will only be counted based on the proportion funded by ARRA. Previous guidance required LEAs to make a subjective judgment on whether a given job would have existed were it not for ARRA funds. ISBE is working on extensive changes to make the ARRA job and vendor data collection tool a separate system in IWAS. This new system will allow LEAs to report job information that will be in alignment with the new OMB guidance as well as vendor payment information.

Study of School Level Expenditure Report: Revisions May Be Required After Further Guidance Received by ISBE

** DUE DATE extended to March 15 **

A school level expenditure report is required per the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for local education agencies (LEAs) that are entitled to funds under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provided under ARRA (i.e., LEAs that are entitled to ARRA Title I funds calculated under the Targeted Grant and Education Finance Incentive Grant formulas). Such LEAs are required to report school-by-school expenditures from state and local funds for the 2008-09 school year for all of their schools (not just Title I schools). The U.S. Department of Education states that they will use these data to examine the extent to which school-level education resources are distributed equitably within and across LEAs.

To facilitate this required reporting, we have created a new IWAS application. To access the application, log on to IWAS, and under System Listing, it is located under "Reporting."

This specific report is focused on ONLY state and local fund expenditures for Regular K-12 instruction, within four categories:

- Personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff.
- Personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only.

- Personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only.
- Non-personnel expenditures at the school level (if available).

Further clarification has been received regarding the specific Function and Object codes to be captured for this report. Those codes are as follows:

All Personnel Salaries at the School Level and Non-personnel Expenditures now include:

- 1100 Regular Programs
- 1250 Remedial and Supplemental Programs K-12
- 1400 CTE Programs (Voc Ed)
- 1600 Summer School Programs ***new***
- 1650 Gifted Programs
- 1800 Bilingual Programs
- 1900 Truant Alternative and optional Programs
- 1911 Regular K-12 Programs – Private Tuition
- 1914 Remedial and Supplemental Programs K-12 – Private Tuition
- 1917 CTE Programs – Private Tuition
- 1919 Summer School Programs – Private Tuition ***new***
- 1920 Gifted Programs – Private Tuition
- 1921 Bilingual Programs – Private Tuition ***new***
- 2110 Attendance and Social Work Services
- 2120 Guidance Services
- 2130 Health Services
- 2140 Psychological Services
- 2150 Speech Pathology and Audiology Services
- 2190 Other Support Services – Pupils
- 2210 Improvement of Instruction Services
- 2220 Educational Media Services
- 2230 Assessment and Testing
- 2410 Office of the Principal Services
- 2490 Other Support Services – School Administration
- 2550 Pupil Transportation (for instructional field trips) ***new***
- 4110 Payments for Regular Programs
- 4140 Payments for CTE Programs ***new***
- 4170 Payments for Community College Programs ***new***

Personnel salaries at the school level for instructional staff only now includes all 1000 series Function Codes and includes teachers, substitutes and their support staff:

- 1100 Regular Programs
- 1250 Remedial and Supplemental Programs K-12 ***new***
- 1400 CTE Programs ***new***
- 1600 Summer School Programs ***new***
- 1650 Gifted Programs ***new***
- 1800 Bilingual Programs ***new***
- 1900 Truant Alternative and optional Programs ***new***

Personnel salaries at the school level for teachers only are within the 1000 Series listed above. Those “teacher only” amounts are to be reflected in BOTH the Instruction cost as well as the “teachers salaries only.”

A revised Excel worksheet is available for download and completion which can be accessed at <http://webapps.isbe.net/expstudy/download/schoolworksheet.xls>. The specific function and object codes, per Part 100 Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting and Auditing, are provided to assist in the calculation of reporting data per school.

IMPORTANT – School level expenditures to be excluded from this report include those:

- From federal program funds
- For special education pupils
- Not associated with regular K-12 programs, such as preschool and adult education.
- That serve students from more than one school attendance area, such as district-wide summer school.
- Expenditures for employee benefits (charged for Object codes 200 and 300).

To facilitate the revisions that LEAs may have to make to their reports, we have extended the due date to March 15.

For those districts that have submitted their reports and need them returned for edits, or if you have any questions, please contact Sally Cray of the Division of Funding and Disbursements, at 217-782-5256 or scray@isbe.net.

Innovation and Improvement

Truants’ Alternative and Optional Education Program FY 2011 RFP

The State Board has release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for TAOEP, which offers supplemental services and/or

optional education to dropouts, truant, chronic truant or potential dropouts.

Eligible applicants are public school districts, Regional Offices of Education, community college districts, public university laboratory schools, charter schools and area vocational centers. Bidders' Conferences will be March 4 and March 12. The entire RFP with the details for the bidders' conferences (Page 2) is available at <http://www.isbe.net/grants/html/taoep.htm>.

The deadline is April 14. For more information, contact Sally Veach, Innovation and Improvement Division at sveach@isbe.net or 217-524-4832.

Request Addresses Tier II Schools, 'Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools'

ISBE has applied to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) for a waiver of the definition of "persistently lowest-achieving schools" and the identification of Tier II schools. Specifically, ISBE is requesting a waiver of paragraph (a)(2) of the definition of "persistently lowest-achieving schools" in order to capture, among its persistently lowest-achieving Tier II secondary schools, Title I secondary schools that are lower achieving than one or more Tier II schools but do not qualify as Tier II schools because they are receiving Title I, Part A funds and do not qualify as Tier I schools because they are not among the lowest-achieving 5 percent of such schools (or lowest achieving five such schools) in the state. Any Title I secondary school that is identified, through this waiver, as being among the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the state would be identified by Illinois as one of the state's Tier II schools.

ISBE encourages interested parties to review ED's School Improvement Guidance for additional details available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>. A copy of the letter submitted to ED and updates will be posted at http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/sip_1003.htm. ISBE encourages all interested parties to comment on this request via email to sip1003g@isbe.net.

Nutrition

Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Unused Funds

For the current school year, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) allowed participation in the program to all schools that requested to participate subject to a \$500 allocation floor. The Illinois State Board of Education allocated the money we could spend with the DoD

amongst all schools that selected yes under Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation on the Annual Order Forms menu option on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS). Recent reports from the DoD indicate many schools that have money allocated to them have yet to place any orders for fresh fruits or vegetables. Schools can see how much money has been allocated to them by selecting Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Participation on the Annual Order Forms menu option on the ICS.

Those schools that have not spent any of the money allocated to them are advised to contact the DoD at 215-737-5573 to begin placing orders or risk having the money used by other schools participating in the program. Unused funds will be available for use by other schools participating in the program beginning March 15. Funds for this school year will be available until the yearly allocation of funding for this program is expended.

Curriculum and Instruction

Updated Adolescent Sexual Health Toolkit Released

The Illinois State Board of Education is pleased to announce that our HIV prevention contractor, the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, has just released the fourth edition of the Adolescent Sexual Health Toolkit. This updated toolkit is filled with current information, cutting-edge approaches, and effective policies and practices that can support your work with adolescents.

To view this update of more than 40 new resources from highly reputable resources, visit the ICAH Web site at <http://www.icaah.wagn.org>. If you have not yet signed up for a membership to access their site, the process is quick and easy. Simply click on this link, <http://icaah.wagn.org/account/signup> and fill out the Web form. Note that they will only use your personal information to provide you with updates to the toolkit and upcoming events. For those of you who already have a full copy of a previous edition, you will find instructions on how to update your existing toolkit on the site as well.

Nominations Sought for Preserve America History Teacher of the Year

The Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award presents \$10,000 to the best history teacher. The national winner is chosen from outstanding history teachers in each state, district and U.S. territory. State winners receive \$1,000 and an archive of books and other resources for their schools. The award is co-sponsored by

the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Preserve America and the History Channel.

Nominations for the Preserve America History Teacher of the Year can be made by a department or division head, school director, social studies director, principal, superintendent, colleague, student or parent. In 2010, the Gilder Lehrman Institute will honor a middle or high school teacher of grades 7 through 12. K-6 teachers are honored every other year. To nominate a teacher and learn more about the award, visit <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/htoy.html>.

You may also contact the Gilder Lehrman History Teacher of the Year coordinator at htoy@gilderlehrman.org or via phone at 646-366-9666, ext. 28. The Illinois State Board coordinator is Mike Hatfill. He can be reached at dhatfill@isbe.net or 217-557-7323.

The nomination deadline is March 15.

Standards and Assessments

2 percent Flexibility for Calculating IEP Subgroup Performance

Starting with the 2005 report card and continuing through the 2009 report card, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) granted Illinois flexibility in how it calculated Adequate Yearly Progress for the IEP subgroup. For schools not making AYP solely because the IEP subgroup failed to meet the meeting/exceeding standards benchmark, Illinois was allowed to add 14 percent to those schools' percentage of students meeting/exceeding standards for that subgroup.

This flexibility was offered pursuant to federal law, which explicitly limited the duration of this flexibility through the 2008-09 school year. As a result of that time limitation, the transition flexibility that was previously offered is no longer available. As explicitly addressed in a letter from the department, starting with the 2010 report cards, the 2 percent flexibility is no longer obtainable. Given last year 56 schools and 84 districts benefitted, the elimination of this flexibility could have impact in the number of schools and districts making Adequate Yearly Progress in 2010.

Under law the secretary no longer has the authority to extend its use; therefore, this is not something that Illinois can appeal to ED.

Professional Development

Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

Application packets are available for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. The awards, which are administered by the National Science Foundation, have been presented to teachers from across the country since the program was enacted in 1983 by Congress.

Award winners receive a citation signed by the president of the United States, a paid trip to Washington, D.C., to attend recognition events and professional development opportunities and \$10,000 from the National Science Foundation. The president can bestow up to 108 awards each year.

Awards alternate between elementary and secondary teachers, with this year for K-6. For more information, go to <http://www.paemst.org>. The nomination deadline is April 1, and teachers have until May 3 to complete applications.

Student Opportunities

Entries Sought for Annual World Schoolchildren's Art Exhibition

The 41st World Schoolchildren's Art Exhibition is scheduled for Aug. 26 to Sept. 19, with the deadline for entries set for April 20. The exhibition is organized by the Association for Education Through Art and the Association of Formative Art Education of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

In previous years, more than 70 countries and territories have participated in the annual event. Students ages 6 to 15 are eligible. For more information, call (312) 616-0805 or e-mail info@edutw.org. The rules can be downloaded at <http://ed.arte.gov.tw>.

CollegeWeekLive's Online College Fair Scheduled for Next Month

CollegeWeekLive's next online college fair is set for March 24 and 25. The Web site, <http://www.collegeweeklive.com>, offers students a chance to explore hundreds of colleges and universities.

The site features live video presentations on such topics as scholarship and financial aid. In addition, admission

experts and student representatives also will be available to answer questions. Visit the Web site to register.

CollegeWeekLive's partners include the U.S. Department of Education, ACT, the United Negro College Fund and Hispanic Colleges and Universities.

National Financial Capability Challenge Ready to Kick Off

The U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Department of Education are teaming up for the National Financial Capability Challenge, which aims to teach high school students personal finance.

Educators are asked to register and get their students prepared for an online exam. The registration deadline is March 14, and the test is to be completed by April 9. Visit <http://challenge.treas.gov> to sign up. The site includes a free educator toolkit and printable awards for high-scoring students.

Serve Illinois Commission

Application Process Under Way for Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

Take note, students and educators with strong community service and volunteerism resumes. The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service is presenting the new Governor's Volunteer Service Awards.

The award program will recognize individual volunteers of all ages from across the state. There are three categories: youth (18 and under), adult (ages 19-54) and retiree/senior (55 and above). One person from each age category will be recognized from five regions in the state.

Nominations are due by March 19, and winners will be announced by April 2. The governor and Serve Illinois Commission will hold a luncheon at the Executive Mansion in Springfield on April 12 to recognize award recipients. For more information and an application, visit <http://www2.illinois.gov/serve/Pages/Volunteer-Awards.aspx>.

Employment Opportunities

ISBE External Vacancy List

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at <http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm>.

In the News

Weekly News Clips

ISBE has posted highlights from last week's education news clips at <http://www.isbe.net/news/2010/newsclips/100226.htm>.